

Remarks

Applicants confirm the telephone election on October 20, 2005, of Group I, sub-combination II, claims 1-13 and 36-51 without traverse for examination.

Regarding claims 36-51, it is noted that these claims to an upper source shield were restricted from the claims 20-25 to a barrel shield and the claims 52-62 to a lower shield for the reason that the sub-combinations are distinct.

Gung et al. U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2005/0199491, the primary reference applied in the rejection of claims 36-51, does not disclose features of an upper source shield. Rather, it relates to a sidewall shield or barrel shield. An upper source shield is a shield for protecting the removable top portion of a chamber wall, the portion to which the material and plasma sources are mounted. A chamber or barrel shield protects the permanent sidewall of a processing chamber. In Gung et al., the shield 162 protects the chamber wall 120 from sputter deposition (col. 5, paragraph [0050]), which is a function performed by Applicants' barrel shield 41. The subject matter of the reference and that of the claimed invention are distinct.

Applicants have amended claim 36 to incorporate language from the specification that emphasizes the characteristics that make the upper source shield distinct from the barrel shield. Claim 36 is also amended to call for an annular element in describing the shape of the upper source shield, rather than a cylindrical element, to avoid confusion with barrel shield, which is more appropriately referred to as cylindrical. The barrel shield of Gung et al. does not anticipate or render obvious independent amended claim 36 or any of its dependent claims 37-51.

Claim 1 has been amended to be dependent on amended claim 36.

In light of the amendments and remarks above, it is submitted that the claims, as amended are allowable, and the application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, and early allowance is respectfully requested.

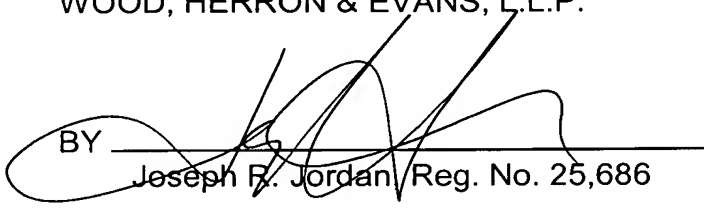
Application No. 10/643,136
Amendment dated February 14, 2006
Reply to Office Action of November 14, 2005

Applicants do not believe that any additional fees are due in connection with this submission. However, if such extension is due or any other fees are necessary, the Commissioner may consider this to be a request for such and charge any necessary fees to deposit account 23-3000.

Respectfully submitted,

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Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Fig. 3. This sheet, which includes Fig. 3, replaces the original sheet including Fig. 3. In Fig. 3, previously omitted element 44 has been added.

Attachment: 1 Replacement Sheet
1 Annotated Sheet showing Changes

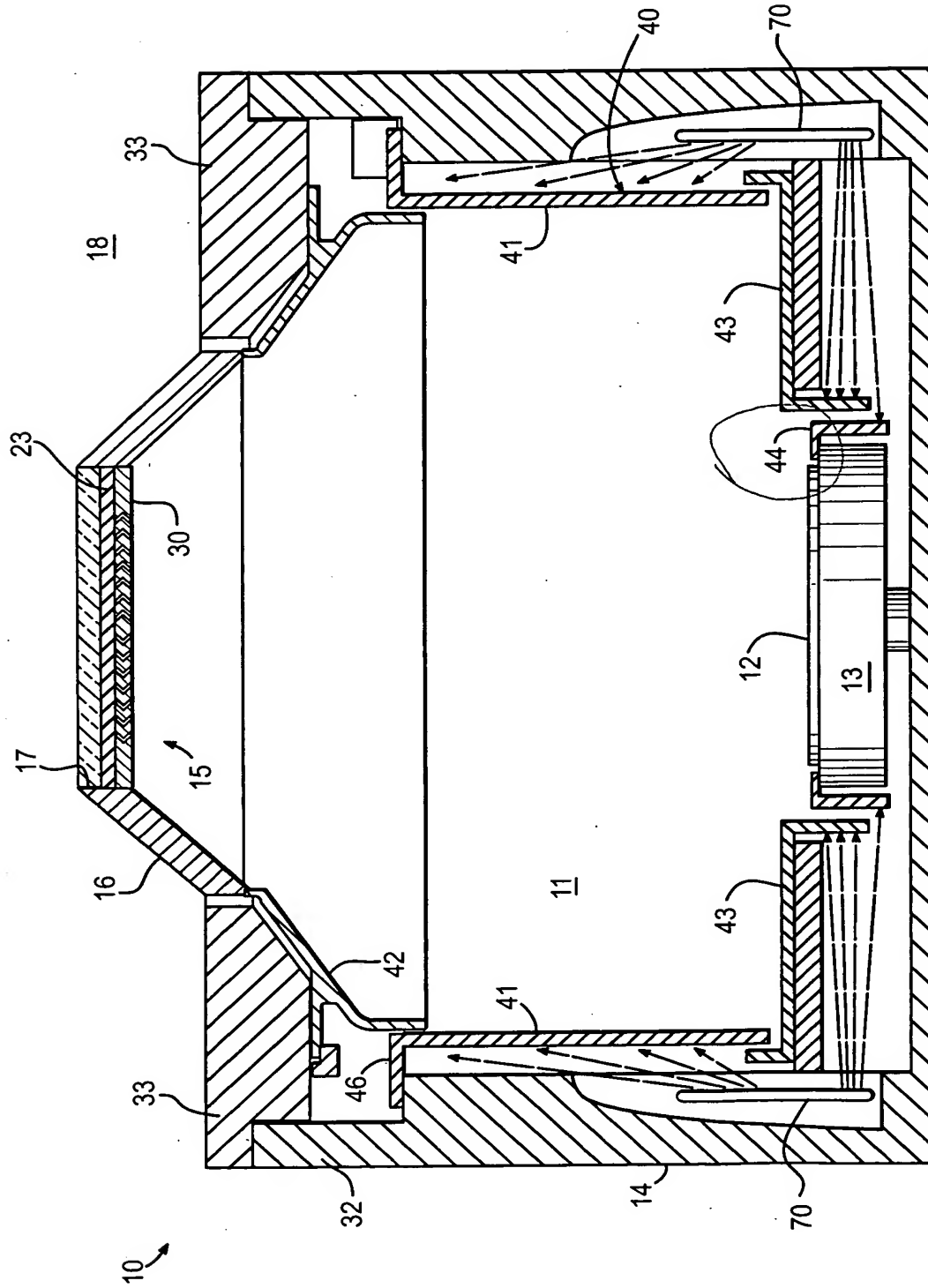


FIG. 3